

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 02333 150206Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 2333

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR MX SEDU

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA VISITS UNAM

1. FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE 1968 STUDENT RIOTS, PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA MARCH 14 VISITED THE CAMPUS OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF MEXICO (UNAM). THE OSTENSIBLE OCCASION WAS TO INAUGURATE THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR. THE CEREMONY TOOK PLACE IN THE "SALVADOR ALLENDE" AUDITORIUM OF THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE.

2. IN POLITICAL TERMS, HOWEVER, THE VISIT WAS OBVIOUSLY TO SYMBOLIZE THE SUCCESS OF ECHEVERRIA'S 5 YEAR DIALOGUE WITH YOUTH - TO DEMONSTRATE THAT THE WOUNDS OF 1968 HAD HEALED. POLITICAL COLUMNS MORNING OF MARCH 14, FOR EXAMPLE, HERALDED THIS AS ACCOMPLISHED FACT.

3. THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT DID NOT GO SMOOTHLY, HOWEVER. DURING A 15 MINUTE SPEECH SUPPORTERS AND DISTRACTORS COMPETED WITH JEERS AND CHEERS, WITH OPPONENTS APPEARING AT TIMES TO OBTAIN HIGHER DECIBEL LEVELS. PRESIDENT AT FIRST IGNORED SHOUTS OF "FUERA" (OUT) BUT BY MID-SPEECH WAS INSERTING PHRASES SUCH AS: "THAT'S THE WAY THE HITLER AND MUSSOLINI YOUTH ACTED; YOU YOUNG PEOPLE MANIPULATED BY THE CIA; YOU YOUNG PRO-FASCISTS; AND YOU'RE PLAYING THE GAME OF THE IMPERIALISTIC COUNTRIES."

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MEXICO 02333 150206Z

4. PRESIDENT LEFT CAMPUS WITH JEERS, ROCKS, AND GARBAGE

BEING THROWN. HE WAS NOT INJURED. AFTER PRESIDENT AND SECURITY FORCES LEFT, HOWEVER, OPPOSING STUDENTS CLASHED WITH AT LEAST TWO REQUIRING MEDICAL ATTENTION, AND PERHAPS AS MANY AS FIFTY RECEIVING LIGHT INJURIES. PRESIDENT CANCELLED PLANNED VISIT TO UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL.

5. COMMENT: WHETHER THE PRESIDENT GOT POOR ADVICE OR WHETHER HE REFUSED TO BELIEVE ADVICE THAT HE COULD NOT VISIT CAMPUS SUCCESSFULLY WE DO NOT KNOW. FACT THAT SOME STUDENTS DISRUPTED OCCASION DOES NOT INDICATE, HOWEVER, THAT CLIMATE OF STUDENT UNREST AKIN TO PRE-1968 SITUATION EXISTS HERE. ON CONTRARY, MOST INDICATIONS ARE THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT LEFT, INCLUDING STUDENTS, IS RELATIVELY SUBDUED. RATHER WE BELIEVE PRESENCE OF PRESIDENT ON CAMPUS WAS THE EVENT WHICH RAN HIGHEST RISK OF GIVING RADICAL LEFT RALLYING CAUSE.

6. IT SHOULD ALSO BE NOTED THAT ASSOCIATING OPPONENTS WITH THE CIA IS A REFLEX ACTION OF THE GOVERNMENT APPLICABLE EQUALLY TO RIGHTIST OR LEFTIST OPPONENTS.
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